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DIVISION OF LATINO AFFAIRS

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PRESS RELEASE

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Commission Officers Named

DES MOINES—On Friday, August 28, 2009 the Commission of Latino Affairs held its first commission meeting, where Sandra Sanchez-Naert of Granger, Iowa, was named Chair.

Sandra Sanchez is a Mexico native and works as the American Friends Service Committee Immigrants Voice Program director, serving immigrants in Central Iowa. She is an accredited Board of Immigration Appeals representative and a qualified interpreter. Her work has been recognized by the Friends of Iowa Civil Rights and the YWCA among others.

The Commission also named Sal Alaniz of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, as Vice Chair and Paula A. Martinez of Carlisle, Iowa, as Secretary.

Originally from Chicago, Sal is an entrepreneurial business owner with a printing and direct mail firm in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. He and his wife Rose, also own a child care center which serves 250 families. Sal has worked on the Targeted Small Business Advisory committee and presently serves on the advisory committee of the Office of Multicultural Health. Locally, he is Chair of the Human Rights Commission for the City of Mount Pleasant and is founder of a newly-formed nonprofit organization, Senior Citizens of Henry County. His volunteer work also includes the American Red Cross, where he is an instructor, Disaster Services and CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams).

Paula A. Martinez, a reappointed Commissioner, works as a Judicial Assistant with the 5th Judicial District. She's an AFSCME Union Member and a Trustee for Richland Township. Paula's a resident of Carlisle, Iowa.

The Division of Latino Affairs is legislatively mandated to promote and advocate for Iowa Latinos under Iowa Code Section 216A. 12. Nine members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate and shall meet no less than six times a year. These commission members shall serve for terms of two years commencing July 1 of each odd-numbered year.